

Trinity Valley Amateur Radio Club



History of the Trinity Valley Amateur Radio Club

TVARC From Inception (1987) Through 2007

A small group of hams in the counties of Kaufman and Van Zandt originated the idea of forming an amateur radio club for the area. It was early 1987 and the purpose of the club was to promote fellowship among area hams and to better support their local communities. The two hams who were original organizers of the club were **Mel Goodwin W5EEY**, and **Dick Grier K5IPV**. The idea and the group quickly expanded to include:

Jim Alsup	WB5SZC
Johnny Ballard	K2YKQ
Red Brunson	W5WPT
John Craig	WD5DTM
Mildred Goodwin	W5ELS
Joyce Grier	KA5HCS
T. J. Holbert	N5LBE
Truman Knox	WB5HGI
Marianne Marsden	KA7CZX
Skip Marsden	K7TMS
George Purnell	K5SXE
Howard Winnett	K5BNI

The FCC database was searched to provide a list of all the licensed hams in Kaufman and Van Zandt counties. The search revealed 101 hams. All were invited to the formal organizational meeting at 9:00am on Saturday, June 27, 1987. The club was established with T. J. Holbert, Howard Winnett, Marianne Marsden and John Craig as the four area coordinators and Dick Grier as Member-at-Large.

In early 1988, the TVARC launched several ambitious goals, including the construction of a new building for the club. Installation of a weather radar station also was proposed to serve the two counties by providing a storm warning system, a first for the two counties. Support and encouragement was garnered from the Kaufman County Judge and from Local FEMA officials. Later in 1988, some members of the club proposed the installation of an Amateur Television (ATV) system.

During the next year, several club members began recognizing that their goals might be too ambitious, and some conflicts among the membership were encountered regarding which projects should continue and which should be postponed or abandoned. Some members withdrew from the club, including Dick Grier, who had originally installed his personal 147.28 MHz repeater at the Elmo site between Wills Point and Terrell for use by the club. However, in November of 1988, Dick chose to move his repeater back to his home near Canton, leaving the club without a centralized repeater.

The club continued and collected enough money to install a club repeater at the Elmo site. Initial attempts to coordinate the repeater frequency with W5TUU were never completed. The TVARC set up the repeater on 147.39 MHz and resumed regular weekly nets and support of community activities. In 1990 the club, with Mel Goodwin and Skip Marsden providing technical support, installed an ATV repeater at the Elmo site on 421.25

MHz. Also in 1990, the club became affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Mel and his wife, Mildred, purchased the Elmo site and the tower from R&M Communications, a commercial two-way radio installation and repair facility in Wills Point owned by Mike Joyner, N5SSS. Mike offered use of the property around his facility to the club for ham swapfests and VE testing. The location was right on Highway 80, so it proved to be a convenient location.

In early 1991, the FCC officially notified the TVARC that their two-meter repeater on 147.39 MHz was not properly coordinated, was on a frequency only 10kHz away from a coordinated station in the vicinity, and was causing interference. The club immediately arranged through Jerrell Jones, the coordinator, to use 146.92 MHz. The repeater was changed, and the FCC was notified that our repeater on 147.39 MHz had been shut down. In mid-1991, the club purchased a second repeater from the family of a deceased ham near Heath, Texas. This repeater frequency was also coordinated and was tuned to 145.27 MHz. The club adopted this repeater as the primary "machine," and the Club net was regularly called on 145.27 MHz. In late 1991 and early 1992, all the TVARC repeaters were fitted with tone boards, and the 136.5 tone was established as the standard for all TVARC machines. The tones had become increasingly necessary to prevent distant repeaters on the same frequency from keying up our machines. The 136.5 tone was also installed on the 70cm machine on 442.575, which is owned by several club members, and on Mel's personal 70cm machine in Elmo on 444.200. A concerted effort was then initiated to equip all members with tone boards for their rigs, if their equipment did not have the boards installed.

In 1994, the 145.27 MHz machine was moved to the tower just east of Wills Point owned by R&M Communications and Mike Joyner, N5SSS. Mike provided us a spot on the tower at the 360-foot level, which was a great improvement for our Club's two-meter propagation pattern. In the same year, the Club's 146.92 MHz repeater was sold to the Emory club, the RARA (Raines Amateur Radio Association).

During the next few years, the ever-present enthusiasm within the club ebbed and flowed. The membership enjoyed installing and using a multitude of ATV equipment. The Club's ATV repeater was connected to the weather radar station near Heath, which the club helped support. During bad weather, the local hams and the community's law enforcement officials also could tune in to the ATV channel and have advanced warning of incoming weather. Many VE test sessions were conducted, and several new hams received their licenses. Several hams were able to upgrade their existing licenses. Many mobile rigs were installed, some at Mike Joyner's facility in Wills Point. Packet came on the scene, and many learned how to use terminal node controllers and communicate digitally. Then came Amateur Packet Reporting Systems (APRS), which allow hams to install trackers in their vehicles and display the vehicle's position on computers at home. Support to several races and bike rides was augmented with APRS trackers. About one-third of the club's active membership is APRS-equipped, and their vehicles can be tracked.

These activities continue to the present time, and our membership is constantly becoming involved in new technology as it evolves. We are a collection of hams spanning several generations and enjoy the fellowship of monthly meetings, visiting with new people and our old friends. We invite you to visit our new website at www.trinityvalleyarc.org to learn where to find us for meetings and when to catch us on the repeaters. Our regular weekly net is conducted on 145.27(-) MHz (tone=136.5) every Monday evening at 7:30pm. The repeater is in Wills Point, Texas. It is a controlled net with rotating net control operators, but all visitors are welcome.

In 2007 we celebrated the 20-year anniversary of our Club. This is not the end of the story; it is the beginning
